THE
# CATHOLIC RADICAL

*"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed."* Peter Maurin

**April/May 2013** ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

# Erasing People's Homes

**by Cassandra Dixon**

*Editor's Note: Since 1989, members of the Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker community have visited the Israeli-occupied Palestinian Territories 15 times. We have witnessed military, economic, and political actions by various Israeli governments which have a single aim: to solidify and expand the Jewish state of Israel and to eliminate or at least minimize the presence of Palestinians. The policy has at times been very violent and at other times insidiously slow moving, but consistent and inexorable. According to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, over 18,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished by the Israeli military since 1967. Along with human rights activists, we believe Israeli policy is inhumane and racist. The following article was written by a young Catholic Worker from Wisconsin who is currently a member of a Christian Peacemaker Team (CPT) in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. It recounts a chapter in the Israeli campaign which, like so much Israeli oppression, will not make it into mainstream American papers. It is not a big story. No one is killed or tortured, but for those Palestinian families whose homes are threatened, it is a catastrophic event. We invite all our readers to put themselves in the Palestinians' shoes and take action to stop US underwriting for this and all such aggression.*

The residents of Msafer Yatta urgently need your help to prevent the forced removal of their villages. Their legal status is precarious, and their homes and schools could be demolished at any time. Such an action by the Israeli military would constitute the largest forced expulsion of Palestinian civilians in many years.

Imagine that your neighborhood was declared a firing range. You would be threatened with forced evacuation. Demolition orders would be issued for your home, your church, and the school your children attend. Your land would cease to belong to you, and your livestock would be removed.

*Mary Beth Owens*

This is what families living in eight villages in the southern West Bank region known as Msafer Yatta face. Twelve villages lie within the area Israel claims as firing zone 918. Residents of four of the villages have been told they may remain, only because the ammunition used by soldiers training for war near their homes is not live. The 1,000 residents of the other eight villages, half of whom are children, could lose their homes, their schools, their crops and livestock, their mosques, and their way of life within the year.

These Palestinian families were forcibly removed by the Israeli military in 1999 and many of their homes, wells and animal shelters were destroyed. Some of the region's residents returned in 2000 and live under constant threat of home demolition, settler violence, and military harassment.

**(Continued on Page 2)**

# War On the Poor

**by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy**

On most Saturday mornings, I run a 5k race that passes by a substantial housing development on Botany Bay Road, off June Street. All winter, I watched carpenters working in the bitter cold framing luxurious new homes. On Valentine's Day, I learned that five of those workers were owed $25,200 in unpaid wages. The developer had sub-contracted the framing to a shady contractor with a history of wage theft. That sub-contractor fled the state. Neither the developer nor the government have provided help recouping the lost wages.

The carpenters' story is a new low in an ongoing campaign by business and government to crush the poor. The profit motive has driven employers to seek ever more devious ways to lower labor costs. The hard-won rights of workers to a decent wage, health care, and a 40-hour work week have been rendered meaningless by a minimum wage that has plummeted in real value and by the near disappearance of full-time work. Most poor Americans have to take on two or three jobs to patch together the minimum income needed to survive. They have no retirement or seniority. They are told repeatedly that they can be replaced. They are fired without repercussion if they get sick, old, or interested in unionization.

In order to hold multiple jobs, the poor spend inordinate amounts of time and money on public transportation, or even more money, trying to keep a used car on the road. Oftentimes, they end up owing a bank more than their cars are worth.

As real income for American workers has declined dramatically in the last thirty

**(Continued on Page 4)**

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*Founded in 1933, The Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.*

# Homes

**(Continued from Page 1)**

On January 16 of this year, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel filed a petition on behalf of residents, and the Israeli court granted a temporary order preventing the forcible transfer of the families pending a further decision. The temporary order is all that is currently preventing the forced removal of the families living in Msafer Yatta.

In the past month, soldiers have repeatedly driven large vehicles across planted fields, confiscated cars, cameras, phones, and livestock belonging to residents, landed helicopters next to dwellings and livestock, and threatened families with imminent eviction and destruction of their homes. Children have found unexploded ordnance in the fields where their sheep graze.

On February 28, 14 Palestinians, including four children aged four to nine, were stopped and detained by Israeli soldiers for eight hours. The group was traveling to see family members who are residents of Jimba, the largest of the eight villages under threat. Soldiers confiscated four vehicles and the cell phones of family members who came to find the group. The group was detained outdoors, unable to contact anyone until police arrived the following morning.

On February 18, soldiers confiscated two newborn goats and a donkey from Kamel Mahamra, a shepherd from the village of Maghayir al-Abeed, who was grazing his animals near the village of Al-Majaz, inside firing range 918. The soldiers loaded the kids into a Hummer and took the shepherd's donkey, which was harnessed to a wheeled water container. Residents of Msafer Yatta and the South Hebron Hills have called for international action to prevent the demolition of these eight villages.

What you can do:

Work with your church or synagogue to draft an appeal to Israel asking them to stop the forced evacuation of Msafer Yatta. Ask your elected officials to speak out publicly against this violation of human rights. Contact the US consulate in Jerusalem and the US State Department: Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, and Mr. Paul Sutphin, Director, Office of Israeli and Palestinian Affairs, US State Department, Washington, DC. Contact CPT at cptheb@cpt.org so we can help publicize your efforts. Request a media packet from CPT Palestine at the same email.

Thanks so much for taking the time to read and think about these very vulnerable children and families. I'll be here working with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Palestine until early May, so if you have suggestions or questions, or would like more information, feel free to contact me at chrepairs@gmail.com. Ω

**from**

# "The Cure at Troy"

**by Seamus Heaney**

*Karen Perrins*

Human beings suffer,
they torture one another,
they get hurt and get hard.
No poem or play or song
can fully right a wrong
inflicted or endured.

The innocent in gaols
beat on their bars together.
A hunger-striker's father
stands in the graveyard dumb.
The police widow in veils
faints at the funeral home.

History says, Don't hope
on this side of the grave.
But then, once in a lifetime
the longed for tidal wave
of justice can rise up,
and hope and history rhyme.

So hope for a great sea-change
on the far side of revenge.
Believe that a further shore
is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles
and cures and healing wells.

Call the miracle self-healing:
The utter self-revealing
double-take of feeling.
If there's fire on the mountain
Or lightning and storm
And a god speaks from the sky

That means someone is hearing
the outcry and the birth-cry
of new life at its term. Ω

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## Can't Give It a Rest!

Despite absence of poverty in Heaven, Catholic Workers just can't stop begging.

- What God finally did

### Take a Look

- Celeb Couple Happily Married
- Gorgeous Star Says Rosary
- Hollywood Chef Bakes Hosts

## LATEST HEADLINES

- Pope Francis Endorses Pacifism, Personalism, & Pizza
- NRA Members Resign En Masse, Guns Melted for Scrap
- Hacker Crashes Drones in White House Rose Garden

## BUSINESS NEWS

- Dow Skids, Workers Take Over Means of Production
- Top 1% Gives 99% Away

## HEALTH NEWS

- Obama Gets New Backbone, Rejects XL Pipeline

## ENTERTAINMENT

- Reagan/KennedySmackdown
- Tom Cruise Joins Trappists

## WEIRD NEWS

- First Breakfast Ever Served Without Image of Virgin Mary

New Heavenly Housing Units for the Poor Expected to be Lavish

In Heaven there Is Good Beer! And No Weight Gain, Sickness, or Hangover

The Catholic Radical Vows to be the Last Newspaper with a Print Edition

Celestial Choir's Mystery Jam

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All the taste with no calories. Enjoy them with your 8 track, lava lamp, pin ball machine, hula hoop, or lawn darts.
If you can't get it here, you can't get it anywhere.

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## CAUSE OF THE DAY

### Christians for Jesus

Petition to get Christians to listen to Jesus for a change.

## POPULAR VIDEOS PRESENTED BY Aok.

Dorothy Day Enjoys Watching "Downton Abbey" More than Listening to Opera

(1:25)
E!

Groucho Marx on Why His New Show "You Bet Your Eternal Life" Should Not Be Censored

(1:08)
Hollyscoop

Gandhi Hi Fives BDS Movement to Promote Justice for Palestinians

(1:12)
Buzz30

Burger King Explains to Krusty Why Heaven is Vegetarian

(1:31)
CCTV

# War on the Poor

**(Continued from Page 1)**

years, the cost of living has steadily gone up. The poor have postponed destitution by putting themselves in the clutches of various usurers. Banks, credit card companies, rent-to-own furniture stores, and pay-day loan companies squeeze billions of dollars out of people who can ill afford the loss. With double and even triple digit interest rates, the poor are inevitably reduced to greater poverty. Many who have tried to escape destitution through education have sunk into even greater debt, often without a college degree to show for it.

Meanwhile, the government, far from fighting for economic justice, makes it increasingly difficult and humiliating to get minimal assistance. At the same time, various jurisdictions are passing laws to criminalize dumpster diving, pushing a shopping cart, sleeping in public buildings, or panhandling.

*Worcester Magazine* reported on February 21 that the body of Donald Sylvia, a 77-year-old homeless man, had been found 100 feet from a parking lot at 56 Worcester Road in Webster. Unless conditions change dramatically, his death won't be the last.

And yet, *The New York Times* reported on March 4, "With millions out of work, companies face little pressure to raise salaries, while productivity gains allow them to increase sales without adding workers." While most of us see a decline in our standard of living, the stock market is soaring amidst a "golden age for corporate profits." When the workers at Hostess refused to accept a third wave of draconian wage and benefit cuts, the corporation chose to go under and give the hundreds of millions of dollars they had squeezed out of their workers as a reward to their CEOs. Like the Botany Bay subcontractor, Hostess decided to take the money and run. Conscienceless profit befitting robber barons has become the norm rather than the exception.

Meanwhile here at Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker, when I told a woman calling for shelter that all of our beds were full, she asked, "Then where do you want me to go?" The city shelter wouldn't help her because she hasn't been a resident for the past two years. The other shelters were full with long waiting lists. She had no friends or family to take her in. She had no money and the weather was bitter cold. She was at the end of her rope and held me personally responsible for her plight. "Where do *you* want me to go?" she repeated.

"I want you to live in a palace, but I'm as helpless to make that happen as you are," I almost snapped, but she hung up before I could say another word.

*Aiden Duffy*

Thank be to God, Martha Yager, a board member of Worcester's Center for Nonviolent Solutions, gave me something to do. She asked if I would speak at a rally for the five carpenters whose wages had been stolen. I agreed and, just 30 minutes after I raced up June Street, I stood there with a sign quoting the letter of Saint James: "**Listen! The wages of laborers ...which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries ...have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.**"

I did not stand alone. About thirty members of the Carpenters Union led the protest, alongside the five Ecuadorans whose wages had been withheld. Worcester City Councilor, Sarai Rivera, spoke for them as did the union rep. When I took the bullhorn, I was glad that I could say in Spanish and English that the Bible was unequivocal on wage theft. Leviticus and Deuteronomy insist that the sun must not go down before workers are fairly paid. Jeremiah 22:16 tells us that defending "**the cause of the poor and needy**" is essential to knowing God. Economic justice should be at our core. It should define us.

All of the Ecuadorans spoke. One of them said that he came to the United States because it was the land of his dreams and because he believed that this was a country where human rights would be respected. He was stunned at how the sub-contractor stole his pay and the main contractor and government refused to help him retrieve it. Only the union had his back.

It has become common for middle class and upper class Americans to dismiss unions as corrupt or unnecessary. State governments are trying to renege on pensions for public employees and award contracts to non-union labor. Unless we push back shoulder to shoulder with postal workers, fire fighters, police officers, teachers, and other unionized laborers, business will continue to drive wages down for everyone. The only beneficiaries from so-called "right to work laws" are greedy corporations whose profits seem to be all the government cares about.

The Church has a role here. We now have a pope named for Saint Francis of Assisi. Will he speak for the working poor as Pope Leo XIII did? Will this pope inspire Catholics to stop making profit an idol? Hopefully, he will, but regardless of the pope's example, the people of God, which Vatican II tells us *is* the Church, must fight for living wages, an end to usury, and a dramatic reduction in the wealth gap. We must stand in solidarity with the poor. It's morally right and in our own interest. As Ben Franklin put it when he signed the Declaration of Independence, "We must, indeed, all hang together or most assuredly we will all hang separately." Ω

*Editor's Note: For more information on how you can support the Botany Bay carpenters, contact Carpenters Union, Local 107, at 508 798-4182. Ω*

# Kill Anything That Moves

**reviewed by Michael True**

Nick Turse, *Kill Anything That Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam*. New York: Metropolitan, 2013. 384 pp.

The title of Nick Turse's brilliant history, *Kill Anything That Moves*, was a commanding officer's response to a soldier's question, "Are we supposed to kill women and children?"

In contrast, an army criminal investigator's response to a veteran, who revealed that American soldiers were abusing and killing Vietnamese civilians, was: "The United States has never condoned wanton killing or disregard for human life."

Turse's readable, indispensable, and, yes, deeply disturbing book may be the most important among thousands of books about the Vietnam war. A major achievement is its explaining how and why "atrocities perpetrated by US soldiers have essentially vanished from public memory." In authenticity and power, it compares favorably with earlier accounts, such as Tim O'Brien's novel, *The Things They Carried*, and Bruce Weigl's poems, *Song of Napalm*.

Titles of the early chapters of Turse's book convey a general sense of the grim and tragic accounts of the war: "A System of Suffering," "Overkill," "A Litany of Atrocities," and "Unbound Misery." In the process, the author documents a commander's standard operating procedure, including burying bad news, concealing violations of military law, and papering over miscarriages of justice.

In training before going to Vietnam, soldiers were taught to regard the Vietnamese as inferior, even inhuman, referring to them not as "the enemy," but as "gooks" or "dinks." This practice reflected the contempt with which the country was regarded by President Johnson, who called Vietnam "a piddling piss-ant little country," as well as Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, who referred to it as a "backward nation."

In a representative account of civilians victimized by the troops, a mother returning home came upon the bodies of her son and two others riddled with bullets. They had been tending the family ducks, while their mother was away for a brief period. Encouraged to raise the body count in this way, one soldier amassed an estimated 1,500 "enemy killed-in-action", by planting Chinese communist grenades on bodies so that they would be counted as enemy dead.

A particularly chilling, though not unrepresentative, account of an "industrial-scale slaughter" involved a two-star general. As field commander in the Mekong

Delta, he "made the killing of civilians into standard operating procedure." In an early briefing, he announced his plan "to begin killing 4,000, then 6,000 a month of these little bastards" then went on from there. As an associate said of another officer, for him, "body count was everything."

Reasonable estimates account for 3.8 million violent war deaths, combatant and civilian, according to reports by Harvard Medical School and an Institute for Health Metrics and Education report. An official 1995 Vietnamese government report estimated more than 3 million deaths, a million of them civilians. Civilian victims of the war included 8,000-16,000 South Vietnamese paraplegics, 30,000-60,000 South Vietnamese left blind, and 83,000 to 166,000 South Vietnamese amputees. These estimates do not include the tens of thousands of Americans and North Vietnamese dead and wounded.

Some information about atrocities, though "prematurely closed and buried," was assembled by "Conduct of the War in Vietnam", a task force established by the top commander in Vietnam and later Army Chief of Staff, General Westmoreland. In what Turse describes as a "whitewash of a report," it concluded that "criminal acts that occurred during General Westmoreland's tenure in Vietnam…were neither wide-spread nor extensive enough to render him criminally responsible for their commission."

More recently, other government officials have re-branded or dispatched the Vietnam war to the dustbin of history. Their re-writing of history perpetuates misleading accounts by reporters and irresponsible editors who ignored or withheld essential information from the beginning of American involvement in 1965.

In spite of efforts to silence them and to deprive the public of an accurate account of the war, many veterans, at considerable risk, gave detailed accounts of their own involvement and the policies that led to various war crimes. In twelve years of research—reading files and interviewing witnesses, Turse documented their testimonies. It included Jamie Henry's testimony, at a press conference in 1970, that the murders at My Lai was only one of similar incidents that occurred "on a daily basis and differ from one another only in terms of numbers killed."

The perspective that Turse brings to this history is truly a gift to public discourse. "Never having come to grips with what our country did during the Vietnam war," he says, "we see its ghost arise anew with every successive intervention." In the conclusion, he asks questions that offer a means to our understanding its full implications, and other wars that followed: "Was Iraq the new Vietnam? Or was that Afghanistan? Do we see 'light at the end of the tunnel?' Are we winning 'hearts and minds'? Is 'counterinsurgency' working? Are we applying 'the lessons of Vietnam'? What are those lessons anyway?"

An obvious answer to these questions might be that those responsible for US foreign policy never met a war they didn't like. In spite of that fact, as Andrew Bacevich said, the Pentagon hasn't won a war since 1945.

One wishes that every American citizen might read *Kill Everything That Move*s, and take to heart its account of a brutal, unnecessary war and the evil that we were responsible for. Sadly, we continue to be lied to about the full implications of US foreign policy that undermine democratic governance. Ω

# Free José Maria Islas

## Repeal "Secure Communities"

On February 21, police arrested four people, including two Yale Divinity School students and Mark Colville of the New Haven Catholic Worker, who blocked the entrance to Hartford's Federal Building to demand that Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) stop the deportation of José Maria Islas. The activists also demanded that President Obama end Secure Communities (S-Comm) and place a moratorium on deportations.

Mr. Islas is in deportation proceedings because police, looking for two Latinos who had attempted to steal a bike, arrested him during his lunch break. When he was acquitted, instead of being released, he was held by Connecticut judicial court marshals on an "ICE Hold Request" or "immigration detainer" and handed over to ICE for deportation proceedings.

The stated goal of S-Comm is to keep dangerous criminals in custody after their normal release date so that ICE can pick them up and deport them. But in Connecticut, 40% of individuals deported under S-Comm have been rounded up on low-level offenses like traffic violations, and another 40% have not been convicted of any crime at all.

The Connecticut Department of Corrections has adopted a policy to limit its participation in S-Comm, but Connecticut Judicial Marshals and local police still participate fully in the program, causing innocent people like José to be detained and deported.

In a prepared statement, Mark Colville said:

"I stand up for José Maria today because he has been unfairly taken from his home and from my community in New Haven. I stand with José Maria Islas because he is one of hundreds of our neighbors and friends who have been victimized by Secure Communities, an immigration enforcement policy that is designed to racially profile, harass, initimidate, and terrorize people. The state of Connecticut shames it citizens by enforcing such injustices. I stand behind José Maria Islas because my family, too, were once regarded as unwelcome strangers in this country, and my God demands that I both remember this and practice the kind of hospitality that ensures that it is not repeated. I stand beside José Maria Islas today because if he is illegal then I am illegal, if he belongs behind bars then so do I. If José Maria Islas is deported, then so is justice and fairness and truth. We are better than this." Ω

*For more information, contact Mark Colville at: Amistad Catholic Worker, 203 Rosette Street, New Haven, CT 06519, amistadcwh@yahoo.com.*

## Pipeline Protest

On March 11, over 100 students and community members marched into TransCanada's office in Westborough, Massachusetts and held a funeral mourning the loss of their future at the hands of the Keystone XL Pipeline, which would transport the tar sands oil that climate scientists say will lock us into irreversible global warming. 26 protesters were arrested for refusing to leave the office in an act of civil disobedience.

Carrying a coffin emblazoned with the words "Our Future," the protesters held flowers and sang an elegy as they marched in procession. Methodist clergy members and a group of mothers holding photographs of their children joined the youth in protest.

In January, eight students locked and glued themselves at the same TransCanada office. Nationwide, the pipeline has already prompted blockades of its construction, civil disobedience outside the White House, and the largest climate rally in US history. Ω

## Accurate Language

In an article defending his shift on the abortion issue, US Represenatative Edward Markey, said, "I believe decisions about a woman's reproductive health should be left between the woman, her family, her doctor, and her faith" (*Boston Globe*, 2/28/13). Calling support for the right to abortion a matter of "health" obscures the fact that a human life hangs in the balance. However, aside from rare cases when a mother's life is endangered by pregnancy or birth, a woman's health is not in question, while the life or death of the unborn child very much is. When we exclude the father and unborn child from consideration in such a grave matter as abortion, we divorce ourselves from biological reality. Such an approach dehumanizes the child and absolves the father of responsibility.

By the same token, using the term "pro-life" to describe an anti-abortion activist, who supoorts war and or the death penalty, is also deceptive.

Accurate language is a first step toward the reduction of all killing. Ω

# Letters

Dear Scott & Claire:
Your Feb/March issue is a keeper. I'm sharing it with my women's group, friends on the west coast, my sister (a former Catholic Worker in San José, California) and anyone in my church who picks up copies. I have not shopped at Wal-mart for 5 years, and their policies need more publicity.

Thank you also for highlighting what small groups can accomplish — the Westborough 8 and the Hyams family. The info on guns was very helpful.

Thank you for your work.

In Jesus name,

**Ann and Art Ratté**
**Warwick, Rhode Island**

Dear Claire and Scott,
Thank you for the latest *Catholic Radical*.

I'm reading about the Keystone XL Pipeline and writing this in a Marcellus shale area. That's the type of rock deep under the earth that, when suitably treated with chemicals, salt water, and impact, i.e."fracking," will give us ENERGY. But theology tells us that energy comes from God, is God. And God doesn't need to poison drinking water, to make well water a skin irritant or even flammable, to offer landowners dubious contracts, or to produce illogical and slanted TV commercials. We hear the same stories as the Westborough Eight did, but perhaps closer to home. Our airport will likely turn over its surplus acreage to Marcellus fracking soon.

Experience helps. I didn't understand the fuss over the Alaska pipeline and its affect on animals until I actually saw the size of the thing. Nor did I understand the full Marcellus impact until I saw one of their 24/7 industrial installations messing up pristine land.

Just maybe the answer is to use less energy, just as it is to purchase fewer items, to avoid or ignore TV's blatant or subliminal push for the latest fashions, the latest kitchen re-dos, the latest cars, all of them with a heavy environmental impact.

Of course lobbyists are another bedrock issue I wish you'd cover, the number and money involved boggle the mind. Who was it said that we have the best government money can buy? Meanwhile, I'm keeping the current *Radical* for a useful reference on guns, Wal-mart, and the environment.

**Joan Huber**
**Allison Park, Pennsylvania**

*Editor's Note: In the Dec/Jan, 2011-12* Catholic Radical*, Claire wrote of James Curran and his founding of the Little Brothers of Saint Francis. Brother James is now in a nursing home, and the community, we are sad to report, is closing. Brother Didacus explains.*

Dear Friends,
...We have sad and shocking news: we have decided to disband. At the heart of this decision was the realization of our limitations of being a small community that has not experienced growth in years, but has frequently experienced vowed brothers leaving. It was evident that due to key elements of our everyday living — a demanding ministry, the maintenance of the friary houses, and the constant hardships of survival as a religious community — we were being worn down physically and emotionally. "Are we living the life or just struggling to survive?" seemed to be the ongoing question.

By the end of this past summer our community was down to just two brothers in the friary: Brother Labre-Marie and myself. ....Back in the fall of 2011, we met with representatives of the Archdiocese of Boston. They encouraged us as a community and as individuals to discern our future in light of the many hardships we have experienced.... With pastoral concern they wanted us to look squarely at our lack of growth, the frequency of brothers leaving, and the consequences of these important factors.

...Brother Labre-Marie and I realized that the end of our life as Little Brothers of St. Francis was now and here.

...Of course, this decision to disband has been very difficult for Brother James, as his life's work has come to a sudden end....For over 42 years Brother James has been fulfilling his role as spiritual father for his sons of this community. As I prepare to move on to wherever Jesus leads me, I am secure in knowing that I have been formed and prepared well by Brother James' teaching and witness. Giving dignity to the rejected of our society simply because it is their right, embracing the hiddenness of Nazareth, and being a man of prayer and stillness will forever, God help me, be my way of life....

With love,

**Br. Didacus-Maria Etrata, L.B.S.F.**
**Boston, Massachusetts**

# Catholic Worker Calendar

**April 10 & 24, May 8 & 22 — Mass or Evening Prayer:** Please join us in prayer and song on Mason Street at 7:30 P.M. Refreshments to follow.

*Julie Lonneman*

**April 15— Boston Marathon:** Keep Scott in mind as he tries to beat his personal record on the 26.2 mile course. During the race, you can follow his success or failure online by typing in his race number, 12476. The same number will give his finish. Please pray that the "Cheeseburger" at the left, who beat Scott handily in 2012, does not win again.

# Mason Street Musings

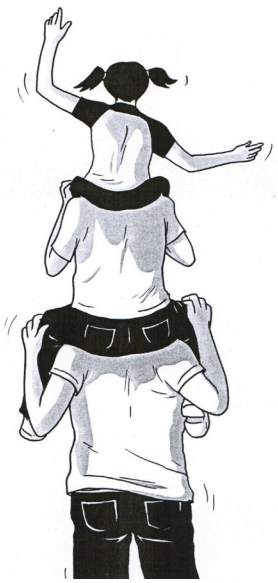
The rock band The Mighty Mighty Bosstones pose the question: "Have you ever had the odds stacked up so high, you need a strength most don't possess?"

Adversity and tragedy can sucker-punch us so hard it's well nigh impossible not to give in to despair. This is especially true for many of our guests and the people we have met in war zones and jails, but it can also be true of anyone, including those of us who strive to follow Dorothy Day's example in the Catholic Worker movement.

Even with our best efforts, many of our guests do not make it to a better place. We barely see one war wind down before another takes its place. Popular values defy logic and reject nonviolence with the vulgar arrogance of the clinically insane. We might well wonder if we are making any difference at all.

In the Fall 2012 issue of *Kinship*, Mark Batholomew, a member of the Holy Family Catholic Worker in Kansas City, wrestled with discouragement. In his article "On Faith and Failure," he concluded, "When I reach my utterly human limitations and the odds seem stacked against us in our impractical and unachievable endeavors, 'these remain,' Paul reminds us: 'faith, hope, and love.' All we have to go on is faith, and sometimes we can do nothing else but love and hope that it's enough."

Thankfully, Mark does not leave it at that because even though Saint Paul's words are true, words alone rarely lift us up on proverbial eagle's wings. Mark goes on to recognizes that community can amplify the potency of those ancient words. Faith, hope, and love in action are powerful tonics.



*Sherwin Tjia*

Time after time, we face financial, health, or personal crises that seem catastrophic until some angel comes forth to help save the day. Rich Kozlowski, "Koz" of the Mustard Seed Catholic Worker has been that angel for us so many times that I have lost count. With only two bathrooms for our household of eleven, we have plumbing problems galore. He has saved us tens of thousands of dollars in repairs and never asks for so much as a glass of cold water in return for his time and labor. He lifts us up as many of you in our extended community do.

My heart was lifted yesterday by a band called Fun whose song "Carry On," says, "...And it's nice to know, when I was left for dead, I was found, and now I don't roam these streets. ...If you're lost and alone or you're sinking like a stone, carry on. ...Close the door. Hold the phone. Show me how. No one's ever gonna stop us now 'cause we are...shining stars. We are invincible. We are who we are. On our darkest day, when we're miles away, we will find our way home...."

The words take wing with their music. All of the arts have that potential. I could look at Van Gogh's *Starry Night* for hours. The play *A Man for All Seasons,* the book *Endurance,* and the film *A Thousand Clowns* changed my life. In this time of joblessness, Claire and I worry the arts are losing people who could lift our souls. We have to bear this ideal in mind as our son, Aiden, prepares to go to college to study art. Part of us wants him to be job savvy, but, when we see him creating a new work of art, we know that a more practical path would make him unhappy and would be a terrible waste.

We are thinking about future generations more and more often because our first born son, Justin, and his marvelous wife, Patricia, are expecting their first child and our first grandchild in June. Claire and I have seen so many children who did not have the opportunity to joyfully explore the world. Please pray that all newborns will have the chance to become the happy creatures God wants them to be. In fact, let's pray that all of us, at whatever age we are, will spread our wings and lift off with the Holy Spirit at our backs. Why not? Ω

**Scott**

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